




Douce Adds. 295



ELMINA; 

OR, THE
Thomas. Haskell
Flower that never Fades.

Haskell

A TALE FOR

YOUNG PEOPLE.



Prin-
mina.

Douce Adds. 295
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ELMINA.

THERE lived a long time ago, and in a very distant country, a young Princess whose name was Elmina. She was very handsome and very lovely : youth and inno-

cence are always so; but innocence frequently vanishes with infancy, and loveliness takes wing at the same time. The young Princess was an orphan; and a beneficent fairy, whose name was Lidoriana, undertook the care of her education. Elmina did not know she was a fairy; but she loved Lidoriana as a friend, and honoured her as her mother.

The

The Princess had one day permission to amuse herself with her companions in a neighbouring meadow. They were presently seen running by the side of a rivulet, pursuing butterflies, and gathering flowers.

When they had gathered a great quantity, they seated themselves under a shady tree, to make them into crowns, garlands, and nosegays; and while they thus amused themselves,



selves, some prattled, and others told tales: it is well known, that young girls love to prattle and relate stories because they remember everything they hear. Elmina less curious and less talkative sung as she arranged her flowers. Her friends were silent to listen to her; and this was her song: it was the fairy, I believe, who had taught her.

SONG



SONG

Lovely Flow'rs, with charms abounding,
Liveliest pictures on the plain
Of Youth and Spring; yet Pity wound-
ing,
That so short must be your reign.

The Vi'let meek, the Morning brought it,
Blooming on the tufted green;
But at Eve, the Virgin sought it,
When no more it could be seen!

Oh, Rose! thy sweets at Noon I'll gather,
Sung the Shepherdess so bland;
She came—alas! the Roses wither,
Drooping in her lily Hand!

Yet

Yet there's a fair supernal flower,

Brilliant thro' the ethereal round;

The Nymph who bears it to her bow

Thrice happy! while it may be found.

'Tis not with violets nor roses,

Nor garden this, nor field confines!

But 'tis the heart its stem encloses,

There its morning lustre shines!

Every grace from this is flowing,

And Love supreme; if this you tempt

Princess! like your attractions growing

This unfading, ne'er will end.

Elmina was silent; all the
garlands were finished,

her companions rose up.—

“What shall we do?” said

they; “we have a great ma-

ny crowns and garlands, let

us play at the *Maid in the*

Ring.” It was one of the

ports of the little girls of that

country: they were to chuse

the most beautiful, to deco-

rate her with flowers and a

crown, and then to sing and

dance round her. But among

so splendid a company of

young ladies, to fix upon the

hand-

handsomest was a very delicate task, and which I should not have wished to undertake. Many were desirous of crowning Elmina, but she was too modest to suppose herself the most beautiful, and she feared that many of her companions were lovely : for she felt jealousy at the beauty of others. “ My friends, said she to them, “ an idea came into my head, by which we may fix our choice. Let

each of us gather a favourite flower, and place it in our hats ; we will then throw flowers into the air, and the maiden whose flower should go highest, she shall be the beauty of the ring.” They all approved of the plan, and they dispersed to gather their flowers.

Among the companions of Elmina was a young Princess called Malinette, who was very mischievous and very proud.

B

proud. She ran to a neighbouring field and plucked a blue-bottle, which she placed in her hat, having first adroitly twisted the stalk round a small pebble.

It is easy to guess why the little cheat did so: by this stratagem the flower was heavier, and she might throw it the farther.

The other young girls chose, without malice, the flowers they preferred. One brought a ranunculus

and

another a cowslip, and a third a lily of the valley. As for Elmina, she went into a little wood in search of an eglantine, which was a flower she loved best. She found a bush all in bloom, and for some reason or other the modest Elmina chose the lightest and the least.

The moment they threw up their flowers to see which would go the highest, a gentle zephyr arose, and wafted

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the

the eglantine into the air; it was short, however, of the height of the blue-bottle when a pretty butterfly flitted about it and carried it away.—The young girls were delighted at this little miracle: they crowned Elmina, and began to adorn her as the beauty of the ring: this was an easy task, for Elmina was very handsome: they had a great many flowers, and if they had not enough, there

was



was a brook just at hand.
The Princess being dressed
and crowned, was placed on
a little throne of turf; her
companions began to dance
round her, singing at the
same time the following
song:

Little Maids, who on the green
Gather the Violets sweet,
Let your nimble feet be seen
In mirthful measures meet;
Now form around
This flowery ground,

Now trip in sportive ring,
 See Innocence
 Your chief defence!
 Come! merrily dance and sing.

The Season's yours
 That joy infuses,
 Bring every tuneful sound;
 'Tis Youth invites
 With pure delights,
 Come! merrily dance around.

And while the morn of life supplies
 Fresh flowrets every hour,
 To cull their various beauties rise,
 And rifle every bower;
 Let Chaplets fine
 Her brows entwine,

The prettiest in the ring!
 The Spring's perfume,
 And Flora's bloom,
 Come! merrily dance and sing.

The sport would have continued longer, but it was interrupted by a noise that was heard in the wood; a little old woman came out of it and approached our pretty dancers. The girls were at first very much terrified, and wished to run away; but the affable air of the old woman, and the soft-

softness of her voice, gave them courage. She had a green gown, a rush hat of the same colour, ornamented with a chaplet of green leaves; her gloves also were green, and she held in her hand a green pot, in which was a little green tree.

It was from this verdant appearance that she was called by those who knew her, Verdurina. "My children," said she, "I have interrupted
" your



“your mirth, but I heard
“Elmina sing of a flower that
“never fades; I saw her ga-
“ther an eglantine in the
“wood, and from her choice
“I judge her to be worthy of
“the valuable present I am
“going to make her. My
“Child,” continued she, ad-
dressing the young Princess,
who heard her with astonish-
ment, “take this stalk, on
“which there are four flow-
“ers and two buds; it is the
“flower

“*flower that never fades*; and it will be
 “ I make you a present of it, the moment you fail
 “ Cultivate it with care; it is in your duty. The third is
 “ know, my child, that it is of a splendid yellow; it is
 “ not by watering it that you can call the *flower of benefi-*
 “ can preserve it.—Look at it: if you are always
 “ this flower, which is of good, it will be always
 “ fine a vermillion, it is called beautiful. The fourth is
 “ the *flower of modesty*. It is of a fine celestial blue; it is
 “ long as your cheeks are of the *flower of gentleness*:
 “ this lovely colour, it will remain whenever Elmina loses her
 “ tain all its lustre. The *flower of temper*, or is angry, this
 “ cond flower is of the purest white; this charming flower will droop.
 “ white; it is called the *flower of purity*. This bud which begins to
 “ open,”

“open,” continued the woman, “will produce the *flower of the mind*: it will blow in proportion to the knowledge you acquire and will thus mark your improvement. The other bud contains the *flower of the graces*: it will open without your thinking of it, and will give a lustre to all the other flowers.”

“Ah! Madam!” cried the Princess as she took the flower

“what

“what return can I make for so valuable a gift? I entreat you to go along with me: Lidoriana will prove to you both her gratitude and mine.”

“My child,” said Verdurina, “you cannot better testify your gratitude, than by showing me one day the flower I leave you in all its freshness. I will return in three years, and if it be then

D

“pure

“ pure, you and the flower
 “ will remain so for ever.”

As she said this, Verduring
 approached the other damsels
 and gave them all some flowers
 from her enchanted tree;
 to one five, to another four
 according to the good dispositions
 she saw in them to cultivate
 her gifts. It is affirmed
 that the Princess Malinette
 received only a bud; and that
 she could never make it blow.
 I speak, however, from report
 only.



only ; for as this young lady had a very bad character, no one has undertaken to write her history.

The fairy (for it was plain that Verdurina was one) having distributed her gifts, ran into the wood and disappeared. The young maidens were all astonished at this apparition ; they abandoned their sports and the flowers they had gathered, to think on those which they had received.

Every one was eager to show them to her relations; and the young Elmina, as soon as she returned home, placed her inestimable flower in a fine china jar, and related to Lidoriana every thing that had happened. Lidoriana appeared to be very much astonished at the adventure: it has since, however, been discovered, that Lidoriana and Verdurina were the same fairy.

El-

Elmina went to bed very happy, but her mind was full of the objects that had occupied her during the day, and all night long she could dream of nothing but meadows, garlands, fairies, and enchanted flowers. Her first care when she awoke was to examine if her flower had undergone any change; she ran to the jar in which she had placed it, but as she approached the window she heard a noise in the street,

D 4

and

and saw a crowd of boys hooting and tormenting a poor woman.—Their tricks and their gibes amused the Princess, and made her laugh: it was not till they were out of sight that she withdrew from the window to examine her flower.—Good God! how great was her surprise and grief to see the flower of beneficence drooping, and the flower of modesty losing its beautiful vermilion. Lidoria-

na



entered, found the Princess dejected, and asked her the reason. "Ah!" said Elmina, "look at my flowers, and yet I have done nothing to occasion it."

Elmina was in reality innocent; for she perceived not that there was any harm in what had excited her laughter; but the flower of modesty had reason to be tarnished, and the flower of beneficence to droop its head, because a young lady ought

ought never to shew any in a manner to judge how discreet curiosity, and still less such care and assiduity it re- to laugh when any person is red to preserve the flower scoffed at and ill-treated. It never fades. Meanwhile,

It was thus that Lidoriana after this event, it cost her but explained the circumstance to be to keep the yellow flow- the Princess. Elmina con- in all its brilliance. Elmi- fessed her fault, and was so she was sensible and good: to amiable, that before the close she beneficent, she had only to of the day the flowers became then to the suggestions of her more beautiful than ever. heart: but the flower of a ce- This little lesson rendered natural blue it was much more Elmina more attentive and difficult to preserve. Elmina circumspect, and enabled her was of a lively temper, and on in the

the least anger, the most tripp'd upon it totally effaced
 fling impatience, the flower nor is it known of what
 of gentleness never failed the weakness she had been
 languish and upbraid her withality, for every body is ready
 her faults. The Princess re- forget a fault over which
 paired them in the best man- they have seen the person who
 ner she could; for she knew committed it shed tears.

that not to repair a fault, was The bud inclosing the flow-
 as bad as to commit it. et of the mind grew larger

As to the white flower, it every day. Whenever the
 is said to have always preserved Princess had been docile and
 its purity. It is true that El- attentive to her lessons, she al-
 mina saw one day a little spot ways consulted it, and com-
 upon it, but a tear which she monly found that it had
 dropped I thrown

thrown out some new leaves, were emblems of whatever
 This flower was the most suitable to adorn the mind of a
 prising of all, as it increased young lady.
 during the whole life of El- As to the flower of the
 mina. Nothing could be traced, it flourished, as Verdu-
 more various than the form mina had foretold, almost with-
 and colour of its leaves. Upon out its being perceived. El-
 one you saw pretty little land- mina had even occasion to re-
 scapes; upon another, plans mark, that if she attempted
 of rich embroidery; upon a to hasten its ripeness, by giv-
 third, representations of histo- ing herself airs in her looking-
 ry or geography; and upon glass, or elsewhere, this singu-
 many a golden lyre, or an lar flower immediately closed
 ivory harp; in short, there up; and it opened not again
 were

E

till

till she thought no more of it. It had only three leaves, but they were so beautiful, so graceful, that by some strange charm they communicated a splendor to all the other flowers that made them still more captivating.

You may well suppose that Elmina, possessing the flower that never fades, and cultivating it with such care, became the most accomplished Princess of her time. The

re-

report of her amiable and excellent qualities spread everywhere; for you must know that there is a little fairy called Renown, who goes about the world telling every thing she knows good or bad of people, and especially of young Princesses. Renown, then, did not fail to publish the virtues and graces of Elmina, and all the nations of the earth wished to have for their Queen so accomplished a

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Prin-

Princess. The son of the King of the Roxalans, heir to the largest empire in the universe, came a great way to see her, and to ask her of Lidoriana in marriage. Lidoriana consented, not because he was heir to a vast empire, but because this amiable Prince had also cultivated *the flower that never fades*; for there is a flower for young men also, and which is nearly similar to the one we have described.

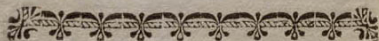
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The Princess could not quit a place that was so dear to her, without first visiting the wood where she had received the precious gift that had been the cause of all her felicity. She hoped to find Verdurina there, that she might again thank her. It was precisely three years since she made her appearance. Elmina then put *the flower that never fades* in her bosom, and went to the wood; but

how great was her astonishment on her arrival to find, instead of Verdurina, Lidoriana, whom she had left at home.

“ I am,” said the fairy,
“ the person you seek. It
“ was I who gave you the
“ flower under the figure of
“ Verdurina, and it is I who
“ have assisted you in cultivat-
“ ing it under that of Lidori-
“ ana. My task is happily
“ fulfilled. The flower will
“ be



be always fresh, and Elmina will be always amiable, and always beloved: for the virtues of the heart and the graces of the mind, are charms that nothing can efface."— The Princess threw herself at the feet of her benefactress, and the fairy tenderly embraced her dear Princess: she then assumed an ærial form and disappeared.

Elmina, overcome with affection and grief, stretched out her arms and entreated her to return. The Prince flew to her succour, consoled her, and conducted her to his empire, where they lived all their lives happy together.

THE END.

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